

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Johnson.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, the amendment that I have on Page 1204 of the Journal does two things....that is, it takes care of one small problem that was left remaining in the bill when the Committee amendments were adopted. The Committee just didn't pick it up. There is no need to make a reference in the bill to the term "poor person". That had a special meaning when the bill was originally drafted but when the Committee amendments came through that meaning was no longer necessary and so I have struck that material. In addition, Section 14 of the bill is one that raises some difficulties because it indicates that when the standard of need is put into place, it's put into place, and it shall be followed by the Welfare Department, and it has always been my intention with this piece of legislation and I made it very clear to the Committee that I had absolutely no intent for this welfare bill, and this literally is the only welfare bill in the body, to cause the Welfare Department to incur deficiency appropriations as a result of its passage, and as a result I redrafted Section 14 of the bill and that's now on the Journal at Page 1204 to make that absolutely clear, that when LB 35 is adopted by this body and is put into place in 1980 that it cannot result in a cost over or under the Welfare Department. The Welfare Department will have adequate authority, administrative authority to make reductions in the standard of need as need be so that ultimate payments to recipients fall within the actual appropriational level. LB 35 essentially is a bill to provide a uniform objectively arrived at standard of need in the welfare programs. It's a very important piece of legislation for it. It is not a bill to provide more assistance or more payments. That will be done by this body through appropriational measures if we choose to do so, and for that reason my amendment which makes that absolutely clear I think is a significant amendment. I would ask you to adopt the amendment. It's found on Page 1204 of the Journal.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Cullan, your light's on.

SENATOR CULLAN: Yes, Mr. President. Mr. President, Senator Hoagland and I have discussed this some but not as much as perhaps we should have. I have an amendment pending just following this I believe that would say that the standard of need will be used only for informational purposes and will not be something that will affect welfare payments or anything else. Now my feeling is, and I'm not